



NEWS RELEASE

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1st Battalion, 16th Infantry company to deploy to Africa

Approximately 150 Soldiers of Company A, 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry recently received deployment orders to the Horn of Africa. A deployment ceremony is scheduled for 2 p.m. March 16 at Custer Hill Parade Field.

The Soldiers will deploy for up to one year to the Central Command area of responsibility as part of approximately 1,700-member Combined Joint Task Force Horn of Africa. This mission detects, disrupts and defeats terrorists in Kenya, Somalia, Ethiopia, Sudan, Eritrea, Djibouti and Yemen, said Lt. Col. Frank Zachar, commander, 1st Bn., 16th Inf.

The company's emphasis during its deployment is not direct combat, but military-to-military training, said Col. Bart Howard, commander, 1st Brigade, 1st Infantry Division.

"[Soldiers deploying with the company] will have the opportunity to partner with a host nation military to both improve each unit's capabilities and show solidarity in the Global War on Terror. The deployment will also provide the exposure to other cultures that is so necessary to foster greater international military cooperation," Howard said.

"Alpha Company has been reinforced with members of the Iron Rangers Headquarters and Headquarters Company to better suit the dynamic mission they will fulfill while deployed," Zachar said. "The unit has undergone a rigorous training program beginning with a Mission Rehearsal Exercise at the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk, La. This is a two month long Iron Ranger intensive training cycle culminating with a training academy and military-to-military Situational Training Exercise here at Fort Riley.

"Without a doubt, the Soldiers of Attack Company, and its command team, led by Capt. (Joel) Huelsmann and 1st Sgt. (Christopher) Spivey are fully trained, capable and eager to perform any mission they are assigned while deployed," Zachar said.

Huelsmann has been the commander of Co. A for 16 months and is a veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

“We are excited by the unique opportunity this deployment affords us, tempered only by the temporary separation from our friends and family. I know the battalion will do an outstanding job taking care of our loved ones here as we fulfill our mission abroad,” he said.

The company will be moving into a mature theater of operations. The main installation in the area, Camp Lemonier, houses approximately 900 troops living in climate-controlled tents. The camp was described as “...very, very austere but very, very safe” by Marine Maj. Gen. John Sattler.